

Spoken Impact's Top 10 List for Being a Better Presenter

1. **A laugh** is the shortest distance between two people, so challenge yourself to include humor or light comments at least once in your talks. It makes you more approachable and creates energy. The only exception is when you are announcing bad news.
2. Create **a key message** that you repeat at least three times during your talk. A great way to come up with a key message is to imagine you are creating a T-shirt that will have the main message of your talk written on it. Then imagine you are handing out that T-shirt to attendees so they can remember your key message and share it with others.
3. When you practice, **stand up and verbalize** what you will say. Too often we run through our presentation in our heads instead of actually standing up and saying it out loud. By making your practice as real as possible you reduce nerves and ensure that what you are saying makes sense. It also gives you an opportunity to practice gestures and vocal variety – two very important delivery elements.
4. **Learn to tell stories** and include at least one in your presentation. Stories have the greatest power to create connection. If you are giving a persuasive speech this becomes even more important. You can tell personal stories, stories from friends, movies, books or historical figures.
5. Author and accomplished speaker Liz Carpenter once advised, "Begin as though you are taking off a pair of long kid gloves. You can't do that in a hurry." The point here is: warm up to your audience, create a personal connection and **provide an attention-getting opener** before you launch into the body of your presentation. Business speakers are too quick to show the agenda and get to bullet number one which can quickly bore or overwhelm the audience.
6. Don't just give a presentation, **start being the presentation**. Too many speakers come across as talking heads. What do you uniquely bring to this presentation? What are your unique opinions, ideas, experiences and reflections? I can read your slides – tell me something I can't read.
7. Ask yourself, "**So What?**" Is this slide or piece of information really relevant to my main message? So often what we need to get across can be expressed in far fewer words or slides. More is often less when it comes to making your message memorable and understandable.
8. Before you put pen to paper (or text to slides) take a moment to analyze your audience and ask yourself, "What is their point of view on this subject?" This will help you develop a presentation that focuses on what is in it for them. Always develop content with your audience's interests in mind. **Don't write for you, write for them.**
9. Watch out for execution by bullet point. Too many points will kill your audience's interest. **Use the PEP formula** (Point – Example – Point) throughout your presentation. Whenever you have an important point to make, be sure to support it with one or many examples. Examples can be analogies, stories, demonstrations, activities or case studies.
10. **Join Toastmasters** for practice. There is no better organization to give you an opportunity to be on your feet regularly and get supportive help and feedback in your speaking.
www.Toastmasters.org

*For more ideas and a list of upcoming workshops, visit our website at
www.SpokenImpact.com*